

REMARKS

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has allowed claims 4-7 of the application in response to Applicant's arguments thereon. The allowed claims are directed to the use of a graphitized layer, which has the function of absorbing a large percentage of incident ultraviolet rays. In this response, Applicant amends claims 1 and 2 to generally align these claims with the allowed claims. The claims as amended state the generic case of UV absorption via an optical catalyst. These claims are thus now similar to the allowed claims, only not specific to the use of a graphitized layer as the optical catalyst.

To the extent that the Examiner's claim rejections may remain germane to the claims as amended, Applicants comment as follows:

The Examiner maintained his §102 rejection of claims 1-3 over the Prein reference, and rejected claim 8 under §103 as being obvious over Prein. The rejections as to claims 3 and 8 have been mooted by cancellation of these claims.

With regard to claims 1 and 2, referring to the Prein reference, the Examiner argues that the optical catalyst layer of Prein is "inherently" located at a position where it will intercept ultraviolet rays generated by the discharge within the laser cavity. Judging from the figures of Prein, particularly Figure 2, the Examiner's analysis in this respect may have some merit. While this may not be true in all embodiments of Prein, it would appear to be the case in at least Figure 2.

However, Prein contains no specific disclosure of the use of an optical catalyst for absorption of the UV light. Indeed, in the species other than Figure 2, it does not appear that the optical catalyst is even positioned to intercept such light. With regard to Figure 2, to the extent the catalyst is even described, there is no disclosure of the use of such material in the absorption of UV light. As described in the current specification, the invention reduces the production of HF compounds within the laser enclosure and prolongs the lifetime of the laser cavity. Specifically, absorption of the ultraviolet light by the catalyst slows or prevents the breakdown of Teflon or other fluorine-containing components within the laser, thereby retarding or

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preventing the formation of corrosives such as hydrofluoric acid, and naturally extending the useful life of such components in the process. Prein contains no analogous disclosure, or recognition of this particular problem.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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